



THE KAIZEN COMPANY

Request for Proposals RFP# KZN-Incubator-0007 Translation Recruitment Support Agreement

RFP Issuance Date: February 8, 2024

Questions Due Date: February 12, 2024, by 2:00 p.m. (ET)

Questions and Answers Posted: February 14, 2024, by 6 p.m. (ET)

Proposal Submission Due Date: February 18, 2024, by 6 p.m. (ET)

Notifications of Award: February 23, 2024, by 5 p.m. (ET)

Anticipated Start Date: March 1, 2024 (ideal date)

Reference: RFP# KZN-Incubator-0007

SUBJECT: Competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) No. KZN-Incubator-0007, Translation Recruitment Support Agreement

The Kaizen Company (Kaizen) is seeking proposals from qualified firms interested in providing a slate of experienced translators and proofreaders for the Partnerships Incubator for the Partnerships Incubator, a USAID project designed to catalyze and support the power of partnerships in international development. We seek multiple firms to identify qualified professionals to provide accurate and timely translations and proofreading/post-editing from English to languages including, but not limited to, Spanish, French, and Arabic (and from those languages back to English) for a variety of high-profile written products supporting the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) localization efforts.

Kaizen intends to subcontract with more than one vendor(s) that demonstrate the capacity to provide the services outlined in this RFP.

The information presented in this RFP is furnished solely for the purpose of assisting Kaizen in making its own evaluation of the Scope of Work and does not purport to be all-inclusive or to contain all the information you may require. This RFP is not an offer by Kaizen to contract, rather the RFP establishes a common framework for The Kaizen Company to evaluate potential vendors. The offerors should make their own investigations, projections, and conclusions to verify independently the information contained in this RFP, and to obtain any additional information that it may require, prior to submitting a proposal.

This RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Kaizen. Kaizen reserves the right to make one offer, more than one offer, or no offers in response to this request and shall

not be liable for any costs incurred by the offeror in the preparation and submission of the proposal.

Kaizen reserves the right to amend the solicitation prior to the closing date; clarifications may be issued after the question/clarification period closes. Any amendments to this solicitation will be issued and posted on the [procurement opportunities page of the Kaizen website](#). Offerors are encouraged to check Kaizen's website periodically.

All questions, comments, and requests for clarifications must be sent to operations@partnershipincubator.com no later than February 12, 2024, by 2 p.m. EDT. Questions will not be entertained after this date.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to your participation.

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Background

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) aims to diversify its partner base by removing barriers to engagement and creating avenues for new and underutilized partners to work with the Agency. USAID's Partnerships Incubator is a global service hub established to amplify USAID's external communications efforts to help strengthen and diversify the Agency's partner base, expand Agency capacity for partnerships, and help partner organizations work with USAID.

To advance localization, USAID, with the support of the Partnerships Incubator, is seeking to translate numerous solicitations, pre-award documents, and the [WorkwithUSAID.gov](https://www.workwithusaid.gov) platform. The Incubator's translation unit seeks staffing support via translation recruitment vendors that will screen qualified professional translators and proofreaders/post-editors who possess outstanding translation/post-editing skills as well as strong USAID-specific (or international development-specific) expertise.

WorkwithUSAID.gov

The Kaizen Company's innovation and expertise in creating public knowledge-sharing networks are best demonstrated through USAID's Partnerships Incubator. The Partnerships Incubator is positioned to transform USAID's partnering paradigm. To realize this vision, the Partnerships Incubator built a state-of-the-art website called [WorkwithUSAID.gov](https://www.workwithusaid.gov), which was launched on November 4, 2021.

[WorkwithUSAID.gov](https://www.workwithusaid.gov) is a free, USAID-funded resource hub that empowers partners with the knowledge and networks to navigate locally led development. To make this platform accessible to local partners, USAID's Partnerships Incubator aims to translate the website's pages and resource documents and seeks support from qualified vendor teams.

Business Need and Solution Requirements

The Partnerships Incubator seeks one or more firms that offer rapid recruitment of qualified staff for the translation and proofreading/post-editing of high-profile documents. We expect that the firms' solution to our business needs may include the provision of qualified professionals to conduct translation, post-editing, analytics, reporting, and collaboration on a glossary with language and phrases unique to our client.

The selected vendor(s) will allow Incubator team members to screen translator/post-editor candidates; order and assign activities to individual, pre-screened translators/post-editors; provide open lines of communication and reporting between the Incubator and translators/post-editors and allow for efficient processing of a large number of documents undergoing translation.

The vendor(s) will track requests and manage to the deadlines provided. It will raise the visibility of what tasks have been assigned and how much progress has been made, reducing

the burden on team members to coordinate with each other and provide constant updates on the status of translated documents.

Translation needs will include USAID acquisition and assistance documents, such as award solicitations, ADS documents, and WorkwithUSAID.gov website content. Additional documents for translation—or additional languages—may follow.

Languages

We seek a firm to provide accurate and timely translations and proofreading from English to Spanish, French, and Arabic, and from Spanish, French, and Arabic into English. Other languages may be added including, but not limited to, Russian, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Kiswahili, Bahasa Indonesian, Pashto, Dari, Urdu, Bangla, Amharic, Hausa, Nepali, Vietnamese, and Igbo.

Requirements

Your proposed solution must:

- Provide accurate translation of documents in the context of USAID’s activities via qualified translators with industry expertise in the field of international development, into and from Spanish, French, and Arabic;
- Provide accurate proofreading/post-editing of documents via qualified proofreaders/post-editors with industry expertise in the field of international development, into and from Spanish, French, and Arabic;
- Embed a process for the Partnerships Incubator to screen/test/approve translators and proofreaders based on their translation and international development expertise;
- Enable direct collaboration between translators/proofreaders and the Partnerships Incubator team;
- Utilize and contribute to a consistent, shared termbase of specialized terminology;
- Provide a dedicated project manager as a consistent point of contact;
- Ensure outstanding quality control of translated products (describe translator qualifications as well as QA/QC process);
- Address significant quality control issues related to your translations or proofread products free of additional charge;
- Enable selected translators and proofreaders to use our selected translation platform (Crowdin);
- Accommodate a variety of file formats, including PDF (if provided source files), Word/Google Docs, PPT/Google Slides, INDD, and JSON; and
- Facilitate hourly billing of translation rather than a per-word rate (helps us to meet the requirements of our contract).

Proposal - Official Response

Your response should include the following:

1. Completed [Google form](#), with:
 - a. Details about your technical approach to translating and ensuring quality control for specialized industry-specific documents and past performance on any similar projects, as required in the RFP submission form,
 - b. CVs of key staff, including multiple qualified translators/proofreaders for Spanish, French, and Arabic, and proposed hourly rates based on their education and years of experience as listed in the labor classification table laid out in the Google Form above,
 - c. References,
 - d. Evidence of responsibility and certifications, and
 - e. Costs proposal should be split if any between:
 - i. Costs with dollar amounts provided for each labor category that will be utilized; and
 - ii. A list of any other potential additional costs under fixed fee (e.g., technical/platform, project management, document translation, proofreading, document re-creation/formatting, dynamic content-based translation of HTML, subscription-based fees, specialized service fees, rush fees, other fees) should be provided.

2. Please note that proposed hourly rates for labor categories from Offerors shall be presented in USD. Rates must be valid for 120 days.

Labor Categories and Rates

Vendors may include all or some categories listed in the table below. Offerors should include proposed hourly rates for each category in which they plan to offer services. **Offerors should submit your rates (column 3) as part of your submission form.**

| Labor Category | Minimum Education and Experience Level Requirements | Firm's Proposed Hourly Rate |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Director | <i>Bachelor's degree and 20 years of experience; Master's degree and 16 years of experience; Ph.D. and 12 years of experience</i> | |
| Senior Manager | <i>Bachelors' degree and 15 years' experience; Master's degree and 12 years of experience; Ph.D. and 8 years of experience</i> | |
| Mid-Level Manager | <i>Bachelor's degree and 8 years' experience; Master's degree and 6 years of experience; Ph.D. and 3 years of experience</i> | |
| Junior Manager | <i>Bachelor's degree and 5 years of experience; Master's degree and 2 years of experience</i> | |
| Senior Program Assistant | <i>Bachelor's degree and 2 years of experience; Master's and 0 years of relevant experience; 4 years of experience in lieu of a Bachelor's degree</i> | |
| Program Assistant | <i>Bachelor's degree and 1 year experience; 2 years of work experience in lieu of Bachelor's degree</i> | |

Statement of Work (SOW)

Background

The Partnerships Incubator is assisting USAID to lower barriers for partner organizations to understand and work with the Agency. For WorkwithUSAID.gov to serve as a successful launchpad for partners around the world to understand how to partner with USAID, we seek translation services support through a service level maintenance and support agreement to translate key content for the site in non-English languages to better serve development partners around the world.

Translation Support Services

The service provider will provide translation services to the project management and web development teams. The Partnerships Incubator is seeking a firm to help us ensure that

non-English-speaking visitors to the site can obtain important information about partnering with USAID. The vendor is expected to accomplish the following:

1. **Document Translation and Post-Editing:** Timely, accurate translation of Incubator-designated documents (fact sheets, transcripts, reports, slide presentations, infographics, and other relevant materials) from English into identified languages – including, but not limited to, Spanish, French, and Arabic.
2. **Document Maintenance:** Make any requested corrections/edits on a timely basis.
3. **Quality Assurance/Quality Control:** Ensure the highest standards of accuracy and professionalism in translation, including the usage of proper terminology based on the nature of documents. The translator is expected to perform terminology research to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of all translations.
4. **Communication:** Provide support via a mutually-agreed-upon platform during the U.S. Eastern Time workday Monday through Friday. Ensure consistency of translator(s) assigned to Partnerships Incubator documents.
5. **Coordination:** Coordinate with project management and translation staff and consultants in order to maintain the flow of publication.

Period of Performance and Location

Expected Performance Period and Location: March 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024 - Virtual/Online

Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) and Contract Ceiling

The total possible dollar value of all scopes of work released through this blanket purchase agreement (BPA) under a time and material contract is \$250,000. Kaizen may select several vendors to provide services to create an “expert pool” of talent. Kaizen will identify successful vendors based on their submissions and will issue blanket purchase agreements (BPAs) to the successful vendors. Award of a BPA does not guarantee that the vendor will be selected for work under the BPA. No work is authorized under the BPA. Rather, the BPA serves to establish the menu of rates and illustrative activities. Actual orders under the BPA will be placed as needs arise. Vendor selection for an order will either be competed among BPA holders or sole sourced to one vendor, depending on the unique circumstances of the particular need, the availability of same/similar services from multiple vendors, and the urgency of the assignment.

The Partnerships Incubator will provide task orders for each activity (rapid response and detailed). Task orders issued under the BPA will be time-and-materials.

Deliverables

The deliverables prepared by the firm(s) under task orders issued under a BPA shall be subject to the FAR rights in data clauses: FAR 52.227-14 and FAR 52.227-17.

Evaluation Criteria

Kaizen anticipates awarding BPAs to more than one Offeror. Awards will be made to those Offerors who meet the eligibility criteria stated in this RFP, and the technical, management, and past performance requirements. Kaizen will use the best value / tradeoff process, as defined at FAR 15.101-1, to determine which Offerors will receive an award.

Labor category rates are not assigned points, and for the purposes of this RFP, technical evaluation factors other than costs, when combined, are considered significantly more important than cost or price. Labor rates will be evaluated for reasonableness and realism.

In evaluating technical proposals, Kaizen will use the following evaluation criteria and sub-criteria:

| Evaluation Criteria / Sub-Criteria | Maximum Points |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Management Capacity | 20 points |
| a. The extent to which the Offeror demonstrates their ability to manage and execute the required services. b. The extent to which the Offeror demonstrates their ability to quickly activate technical expertise and / or respond to client requests | |
| 2. Technical Capacity | 25 points |
| a. The extent to which the Offeror demonstrates their overall understanding of the technical requirements b. The extent to which the Offeror demonstrates their technical expertise | |
| 3. Past Performance | 35 points |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The extent to which the Offeror demonstrates exceptional past performance (especially quality of service and timeliness of service). b. The extent to which the Offeror provides evidence or examples of work that they have accomplished | |
| 4. Illustrative Expertise | 20 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The extent to which the Offeror provides qualified experts for translation or proofreading | |

Conflict of Interest

Successful Offerors who have worked previously with the Partnerships Incubator will be precluded from performing downstream work on projects in which they were involved in designing, evaluating or auditing. These situations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Offerors who meet these preclusion requirements will not be denied a BPA, but will be precluded from specific task order opportunities under the BPA.

Negotiations

It is anticipated that BPAs will be awarded solely on the basis of the final offers received. However, Kaizen reserves the right to conduct discussions, negotiations and/or request clarifications prior to awarding a BPA. Kaizen also reserves the right to establish competitive range and limit the number of Offerors in the competitive range in order to permit an efficient evaluation environment among the most highly rated proposals.

The highest-ranked Offerors, as determined by the technical evaluation committee, may be asked to submit their best prices or technical responses. Offerors may also be requested to conduct translation tests.

Kaizen intends to make awards to multiple Offerors, but reserves the right to make a single award or to make no award at all.

Payment Terms

No payment will be issued under the BPA. Only BPA holders who receive a task order will be eligible for payment as described herein. If a call order is awarded under a BPA, the vendor

shall provide the services / supplies outlined in the call order scope of work, and will invoice Kaizen in accordance with the following Payment Schedule.

- The Vendor will bill the appropriate rate based on the labor category of staff. The subcontractor may not work or be reimbursed for hours beyond the maximum approved hours at the relevant labor category level.
- The Vendor will bill Kaizen every two weeks on Friday using Kaizen’s invoicing template or that which is agreed upon by Kaizen and the Offeror.
- The Vendor shall be reimbursed for the exact number of hours worked each approved day, but in no case shall the Vendor be reimbursed for more than eight hours of their labor per staff member during an approved workday. The subcontractor is asked to detail their labor log(s) for project tracking purposes.

RFP Timeline

| Activity | Due | Notes |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| RFP released | February 8, 2024 | Posted to the Kaizen website and shared on LinkedIn and other social media channels. |
| Questions Due Date | February 12, 2024 | Submit to operations@partnershipsincubator.com by February 12, 2024, by 2:00 p.m. (ET) |
| Questions posted | February 14, 2024 | Kaizen will post answers to vendor questions by 6 p.m. ET February 14, 2024 |
| Proposal Submission Due Date | February 18, 2024 | Submissions will be accepted anytime until February 18, 2024, by 6:00 p.m. (ET) |
| Notification of award | February 23, 2024 | The winning vendor will be notified before 5:00 p.m. (ET) |

Disclaimer

This RFP represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of proposals and does not legally obligate The Kaizen Company to accept any of the submitted proposals in whole or in part, nor is The Kaizen Company obligated to select the lowest-priced proposal.

The Kaizen Company reserves the right to negotiate with any or all individuals, but with respect to price, costs, and/or scope of services. The Kaizen Company has no contractual obligations with any consultants based upon the issuance of this RFP. It is not an offer to contract. Only the execution of a written contract shall obligate The Kaizen Company in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such a contract.

Branding Policy and Strategy

Branding Strategy Implementation and Marking under this contract must comply with the “USAID Graphics Standards Manual” available at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding> and any successor branding policy as detailed in the [Automated Directive System \(ADS\) Chapter 320](#).

USAID Disability Policy

The offeror will ensure compliance with USAID Disability Policy (December 2004). The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host-country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website:

<http://www.usaid.gov/about/disability/DISABPOL.FIN.html>

USAID through Kaizen via service providers, therefore, requires that the service provider does not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID programs and that it makes every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the contract. To that end and within the scope of this contract, the service provider’s actions must demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women, and children with disabilities.